Library

ANNUAL REPORT.

Upon the Health and Sanitary Conditions of the

BELFORD RURAL DISTRICT

for the year ending 31st. December 1951.

STATISTICS

1.	Area	-	39,797 acres.
2.	Registrar-General's estimate of the Resident Population (1951) (mid-year)	-	5,155
3.	Number of inhabited houses (end of 1951)	-	1,848
4.	Rateable Value	-	£26,911
5.	Sum represented by a penny rate.	-	£105.10/-.

VITAL STATISTICS.

		Total.	M.	F.	
Live Births.	(Legitimate)	72	27.	35	) Birth Rate. 14·7 per 1000 of estimated resident population.
	(Illegitimate)	4	2	2	
		76	29	37	
Still Births.		1	1		
Deaths.		88	45	43	) Death Rate 17 per 1000 of estimated resident populati

England and Wales - Birth Rate 15.5 per 1000. Death Rate 12.5 per 1000.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes.	-	Nil.
Death rate of infants under one year of age	-	Total 1.
All infants per 1000 live births	-	Rate 13
Legitimate Infants per 1000 legitimate live births	-	Rate 14
Illegitimate infants per 100 illegitimate live births	-	Rate Nil.
Deaths from cancer (All ages)	..	12
Deaths from Measles. (All Ages)	-	Nil.
Deaths from Whooping Cough (All Ages)	-	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	-	Nil.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY.

(a) MEDICAL

D.T.J.Mc.Donald, M.D. Ch.B. (Edin) South Bank, Belford.
(i) Medical Officer of Health (part time)

(b) OTHERS.

W.R. KIRK, M.S.I.A., Seabank, Seahouses.
Sanitary Inspector & Surveyor and Building Surveyor.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY.

The four main supply system to the townships of Belford, Seahouses, Beadnell (Council owned) and Bamburgh (privately owned) yielda generally satisfactory, and except during the peak demand of July and August , a suffifient supply of water.

The Belford Water though satisfactory bacteriologically has a varying 'Red' contamination at times very heavy due to the presence of the spores of gallionella and crenothrix and high iron content. This necessitates frequent scouring of the supply main to keep to a minimum the deposit on the pipe lining. The three main springs Nos. 1 and 2 West and the 'Red' are all effected, the Red Spring particularly so. Normally the 'Red' Spring is run to waste but in times of shortage or exceptional demand it has to be brought into the system. The need for this is considerably reduced if the W.D. Borehole pump is used to augment the supply.

At Seahouses the amount of pumping from the Borehole with its hard water was considerably reduced by reason of an increase by 50% of the water running with the Reservoir. This was obtained by the descaling of the upper two-thirds of the 4" supply main from the Brockdam source.

The old 3" branch main to Beadnell from the Brockdam source was also descaled during the year. This had no appreciable effect on the supply there as the new (1938) 4" main continued to function with complete satisfaction.

The proposal to acquire the Bamburgh Supply now that the Minister was prepared to give it favourable consideration was proceeded with. Lord Armstrong and the Duke of Northumberland were asked to state the terms for the purchase of the undertaking and the taking over of the water rights respectively. These were agreed om principle but there was considerable difficulty in obtaining a draft of the agreement from His Grace due to legal considerations. The negotiations are proceeding.

The Consulting Engineers carried out surveys and prepared details of Stage I for submission to the Minister of Health for approval. The Minister having approved the scheme the Engineers are preparing details and schedules to allow the work to go to tender.

During the year six samples of water were taken for chemical analyses and three samples for bacteriological examination. Those samples from the Brockdam source were somewhat acid in reaction and the analyst recommended treatment by lime. Provision has been made by the Consulting Engineers to treat the water by contact with limestone chippings. The others were satisfactory and bacteriologically pure.

Water is supplied from public mains to houses in the following Parishes:-

PARISH.	Piped into house.	By standpipe.	Total No.of houses.
North Sunderland.	406	76	482
Belford.	230	7	237
Beadnell.	137	19	156
Chathill.	16	-	16
Ellingham.	15	9	24
Fleetham.	11	5	16
Swinhoe.	6	12	18
Totals.	821	128	949.

SEWERAGE & SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The position at Beadnell continues to be unsatisfactory and the Minister of Health was asked to assist in getting a scheme approved. Doctor Donaldson from the Ministry examined the

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

https://archive.org/details/b28915951

conditions prevailing and advised the submission of a scheme to sewer the village to the Ministry of Local Government and Planning, the Consulting Engineers were accordingly instructed to prepare a scheme of sewerage for the Village to submit to the Minister for his approval.

A small extension of the sewer at Ellingham was laid to drain seven cottages.

MEAT & OTHER FOODS.

The number of shops and other premises where food is sold or prepared within the District are as follows:-

Butchers ...	7
Bakers (with bakeries attached)	7
Grocers & General Dealers	18
Greengrocers. ...	4
Confectioners. ...	8
Fishmongers. ...	1
do (with vans only)...	3
Fish & Chip Shops ...	3
Cafes.	5
Hotels. ...	17
Boarding Houses (5 or more beds)	6
Public Houses (excludings licensed Hotels)	8

During the year the following items of food have been condemned.

8 Stones Mutton (home killed)
132 Tins of canned goods.
17 lbs. of bacon.
210 lbs, of canned ham,

A regretably large quantity of imported canned ham imported (mostly from Italy) was condemned as unfit, due to defective canning.

No slaughtering of animals for sale is carried on in the District.

Ice-Cream.

Manufacturer Retailers cold mix	...	1
do. do. heat treated	...	3
Retailer only (pre-packed)	...	11

22 samples were taken to Newcastle distant 50 miles for testing. A refrigerated sample cabinet was not used.

The standard was regrettably low, possibly due to the long distance to be carried by car on a hot day. This is confirmed the fact that samples of ice-cream produced by firms of undoubted standing were reported as Grade 3 or 4. The taking of these samples does little more than urge the manufacturers and retailers to continue to exercise care in their processing and handling.

Food Handling.

The standard of cleanliness in food shops and food preparation premises shows some improvement over last year. Some warnings were necessary and an improvement resulted.

Public Cleansing.

The Council's scavenging service to the four main Villages was extended to include the two small Parishes of Bamburgh Castle and Monkshouse. A weekly collection is made which is easy to maintain for four months of the year, but in the holiday season, when hotels and boarding houses are full and 'summer' houses occupied the amount of refuse then to be collected is a severe strain on the service and a considerable amount of overtime has to be worked.

Rodent Control.

The previous arrangement to employ jointly with Norham & Islandshires R.D.C. a rodent operative for the winter half of the year was extended to cover the whole year w.e.f. 1st.October.

Private dwelling houses are treated free of charge to encourage the co-operation of the householder whose rats always come from next door. This has produced the answer hoped for. Every effort too is being made to persuade farmers to avail themselves of this service, which is generally cheaper than the Agricultural Executive Committees and is equally effective.

HOUSING.

New houses completed during the Year.

By Local Authority	...	24 (Permanent)
By Private Enterprise	...	5 (Permanent)

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action ... 69.

Summary of work effected during the Year.

Privy and privy ashpits abolished	 37
Water closets provided	 39
Sanitary Bins provided	 55
Sanitary bins renewed	 29
New drains constructed	 40
Drains repaired.	 11
Scullery sinks provided	 37
Yards repaired.	 23

PLANS.

53 Plans were submitted for approval under the Byelaws. These were examined and 52 were recommended fpr approval and 1 for rejection.

38 Applications were submitted and 37 were approved.

Civil Building Licences.

Building licences in the sum of £13,786 were issued during the year for maintenance of property including the conversion of stables to two cottages.

Licences for 10 houses were issued of which three were not proceeded with.

.....

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS & OTHER DISEASE DURING 1950.

During the year 33 cases of Infectious Disease were notified:-

Measles	- 18	Chickenpox	- 3
Tuberculosis	- 6	Scarlet Fever	- 2
Whooping Cough	4		

The Rural District was singularly free of notifiable infectious disease during 1951. A few cases of MEASLES appeared in Belford and its neighbourhood, but did not assume epidemic proportions, due no doubt to the heavy epidemic of this disease in the District during 1950. INFLUENZA manifested itself in the District just before Christmas 1950, and rapidly assumed epidemic proportions in January and February 1951. The disease affected people of all groups, but was particularly severe amongst older people. Chest complications were specially severe, and as a result of this there were nine deaths, the average age of the victims being 75 year (oldest 88 yrs. youngest 56 yrs) This was the severest epidemic of Influenza since 1937, when in the corresponding quarter 7 people succumbed to the disease.